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Date: Friday, January 14, 2011 10:04PM
Subject: Fw: Friday night press coverage on Waimanalo Gulch runoff

Fyi

From: Dean Higuchi
Sent: 01/14/2011 09:33 PM PST
To: Keith Takata; Alexis Strauss; David Wampler; Ellen Blake; Jason Brush; Joann Cola; Ken Greenberg; Nancy Woo; Wendy Wiltse; Jane Diamond; Daniel Meer; Jeff Scott; Arlene Kabei; Rich Vaille; Nancy Marvel; Kathleen Johnson; Katherine Baylor; HarryL Allen; Rich Martyn; Dustin Minor; Andrew Helmlinger; Jared Blumenfeld; Teddy Ryerson; William Glenn
Subject: Friday night press coverage on Waimanalo Gulch runoff

Here's a round up of news on the Gulch runoff. City has closed the landfill until Jan. 22 according to the story below and City News Release:

**CITY MEETS WITH WASTE
MANAGEMENT ON STORMWATER ISSUES**

City and County of Honolulu: (Fri., Jan. 14, 2011) – The City and County of Honolulu and the Department of Environmental Services (ENV) met today with Waste Management of Hawaii (WM), the operator of the Waimanalo Gulch Sanitary Landfill (WGSL), to discuss issues resulting from a 100-year storm event earlier in the week and the temporary closure of Oahu's only municipal solid waste landfill.

The WGSL has been closed for three days and expected to be closed till Jan. 22. As a result of its closure, City Convenience Centers will be accepting only burnable household waste, along with green waste, tires, car batteries and appliances. During the same time frame, residents are asked to set out only metal appliances for bulky item pick up and restore all other bulky waste back on their property until further notice.

"We are asking for the public's assistance in reducing those waste streams until further notice," said ENV Director Tim Steinberger, "and the City will continue to provide its normal refuse collection." Meanwhile, the WGSL will remain closed until the accumulated stormwater is removed and the affected areas are able to resume operations.

Heavy rains keep Waimanalo Gulch closed

Last Update: 5:27 pm
KHON TV 1/14/11

<http://www.khon2.com/content/news/developingstories/story/Heavy-rains-keep-Waimanalo-Gulch-closed/XRHfY1aqDUGEO8BCW6JHPA.csp>

Waimanalo Gulch Sanitary Landfill is expected to be closed until January 22 as the City works to remove accumulated stormwater from the recent heavy rains.

As a result of the closure, City Convenience Centers will be accepting only burnable household waste, along with green waste, tires, car batteries and appliances.

Residents are also asked to set out only metal appliances for bulky item pick up and to store all over bulky waste back on their property until further notice.

Waimanalo Gluch Sanitary Landfill is Oahu's only municipal solid waste landfill.

Landfill waste discharged into ocean, includes medical waste

KHON TV 1/14/11

Landfill waste washing onto beaches includes syringes and other medical waste

Landfill waste from Waimanalo Gulch is once again in the ocean.

According to the city, storm water collected in the landfill cells, and will require the landfill's operator, Waste Management, to discharge stormwater into the storm drainage system over the next few days.

The drainage empties into the ocean near Ko Olina, prompting the closure of the lagoons at the resort area. Among the waste spotted on the beaches is medical waste like sterilized syringes and blood vials. The public is advised to avoid waters near Ko Olina and Kahe Power plant because of possible contamination.

In addition, the city says Waimanalo Gulch Landfill could be closed for the next 7 days, and people are advised not to put out bulky trash because it will not be picked up.

Wastewater discharge from Waimanalo Gulch landfill continues

<http://www.staradvertiser.com/news/breaking/113618079.html#>

By Star-Advertiser Staff

POSTED: 09:19 a.m. HST, Jan 14, 2011

Ko Olina beaches remain closed today as the city's landfill operator continues to release rainwater from the Waimanalo Gulch Sanitary Landfill into the storm drainage system, which flows into the ocean.

The Honolulu Department of Environmental Services says the "unprecedented series of heavy rain events over the last week" prompted the decision to have Waste Management, the landfill operator, discharge the water over several days.

The storm drains discharge into the ocean between Ko Olina and the Kahe Power Plant.

The state Health Department said there was an uncontrolled release of stormwater Wednesday night and refuse, including medical waste, washed ashore at the Ko Olina Lagoons. The city has posted warning signs and water samples are being collected.

"After having numerous and ongoing discussions with various branches of the state Department of Health over the past several days, the decision was made to release the stormwater today, given the lack of feasible alternatives," the city said in a news release.

"The city will continue to meet with its operator to discuss the discharge, to ensure compliance with all applicable permits and laws, and will investigate the accumulation of stormwater as well as the possible presence of sterilized medical waste," the city said.

The flooded cell where the rainwater has collected last received waste on December 18 and was covered at the end of the day in conformance with Waste Management's permit, the city said.

Landfill Flooding Contaminates Ocean, Beaches

<http://www.kitv.com/news/26490893/detail.html>

Keoki Kerr, KITV News, 1/14/11

NANAKULI, Oahu -- For the second time in a month, flood waters and trash from the city's landfill in Nanakuli were discharged into the ocean along Oahu's Leeward Coast Wednesday night.

As a result, resorts in Ko Olina have closed their beaches after medical waste washed up on their shores Thursday, according to the state health department.

Parts of the Leeward Coast got close to 1 foot of rain Wednesday night, while the city is still trying to build a new storm water catchment system at the Waimanalo Gulch landfill, causing the spill.

"Obviously, this was not supposed to happen," said Gary Gill, deputy state health director for environmental health. "This is the last thing anybody would want to have happen. But it has happened and we're dealing with it as quickly as we can."

Gill said health officials are advising the public to stay out of the waters between Ko Olina resort and the Kahe power plant. "It would be wise for people to stay out of the water, they should stay out of the water anyway after a big rain storm, regardless of whether that is coming off the landfill or not," he said.

The state does not know how much contaminated water and trash went into the ocean.

Gill said storm water has collected into a pond at the top of the landfill, and to prevent further damage to the landfill, that water still needs to be pumped out.

"There's no other viable way to remove it except by pumping it down into the storm system," Gill said.

The city's Department of Environmental Services released a written statement Thursday night shortly before 10 p.m.

"After having numerous and ongoing discussions with various branches of the state Department of Health over the past several days, the decision was made to release the stormwater today, given the lack of feasible alternatives," the statement said.

"The city will continue to meet with its operator to discuss the discharge, to ensure compliance with all applicable permits and laws, and will investigate the accumulation of stormwater as well as the possible presence of sterilized medical waste," the city said.

Gill said more discharges are expected over the next few days, entering the sea from a concrete culvert on the ocean side of the landfill.

"Every discharge from the landfill caused by this pumping is going to be monitored and we will reduce or eliminate any waste, floatable waste matter from the landfill, so that that doesn't get discharged," Gill added.

A storm water catchment system at the base of the landfill is too small and can't handle the water from big storms, since the landfill has expanded over the years, Gill said.

The city is designing a storm water diversion system there, but it is not completed yet.

Gill said last night's landfill flooding and a similar episode that happened there just before Christmas will result in the city facing some kind of penalty from the state health department, but he said the state is

working with the city to fix the situation first.

In the first incident, lasting more than four days just before Christmas of last year, the operators of the landfill dumped potentially-contaminated storm water into the ocean, according to health department officials.

"Obviously, this is a serious situation and there are potential violations that have taken place, but we're not pursuing this right now, trying to play 'gotcha' with the city, we're trying to take care of the problem," Gill said.

For more than four days just before Christmas, the operators of the landfill dumped potentially-contaminated storm water into the ocean, according to health department officials.

KITV 4 News received word of the landfill flooding incident at 5:50 p.m., after the offices of the city and its landfill contractor, Waste Management Inc., had closed for the day. Messages left with both officials from the city and from its contractor late Thursday afternoon were not immediately returned.

The state health department e-mailed a news release about the incident at 6:34 p.m. Thursday, hours after a morning conference call between city and state officials about the situation.

Landfill succumbs to rain, spills trash into ocean at Ko Olina

<http://www.hawaiinewsnow.com/Global/story.asp?S=13847843>

Jan 14, 2011 By Brooks Baehr - Hawaii News Now

Workers from Waimanalo Gulch Landfill picked up medical waste and other trash from the coast at Ko Olina Friday. And city workers collected water samples to be tested for contaminants.

Rain from a storm late Wednesday and early Thursday overwhelmed the sediment holding pond at the landfill. Water poured over the banks of the pond carrying garbage from the landfill through storm drains and into the ocean at Ko Olina.

"This should not have happened. There's not supposed to be storm water running over a landfill and certainly a landfill is not supposed to erode and put garbage into the ocean," said Gary Gill, deputy director with the state Department of Health.

"Any visible garbage that's left the site and is on the beach needs to be cleaned up. Aside from just removing the viewable floatables, the trash, any kind of medical waste that might be out there, you'll be wondering about contaminants whether they be chemical or biological," Gill added.

Waimanalo Gulch Landfill is owned by the city. It is operated by a Waste Management. The company is in the process of upgrading its drainage system, but said Friday those upgrades were still three weeks from being finished when the storm hit.

Waste Management general manager Joe Whelan said the landfill usually sees between 12 and 15 inches of rain a year. Close to 11 inches fell during the mid-week storm.

"You're talking an awful lot of water accumulating that we normal don't see. So, I mean, you have to put things into perspective. It's similar to having a tsunami coming off the hillside," said Tim Steinberger, director of the city Department of Environmental Services.

Beaches at the Ko Olina resort are closed and warning signs have been posted near the outfall below the landfill warning people the water is likely contaminated.

The incident has renewed calls for the landfill to be closed.

"It is abundantly clear that the Waimanalo Gulch Landfill needs to be closed. No amount of 'best management practices' can mitigate the adverse impacts this landfill operation has on the surrounding environment, including the community's health and welfare," said Ken Williams, of the Ko Olina

Community Association.

The landfill is closed until the water recedes. Normal automated curb-side trash pick-up will continue as usual, but the city is temporarily suspending its bulky trash pick-up. Steinberger urges people not to put large items out for pick-up until the landfill is re-opened.

The EPA is gathering information about the spill through the state Department of Health. "When there's a violation of permits or water quality, there's a potential enforcement action," Gill added. That "enforcement action" could come in the form of fines against the city or Waste Management.

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